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ABSTRACT

In this lesson, students create an African Art Museum. Student teams research the culture and art history of particular regions in Africa. They collect art images for the museum, studying aspects of each artwork's creation and its relation to the culture. Each team will give the class a guided tour of its wing of the museum. Teams consist of researchers, designers, recorders, and tour guides. Students are provided with background information, detailed instructions, online resources, and reflection questions. The teacher's notes describe the unit's purpose, explain the application of history/social science standards, and suggest teaching strategies. (BB)

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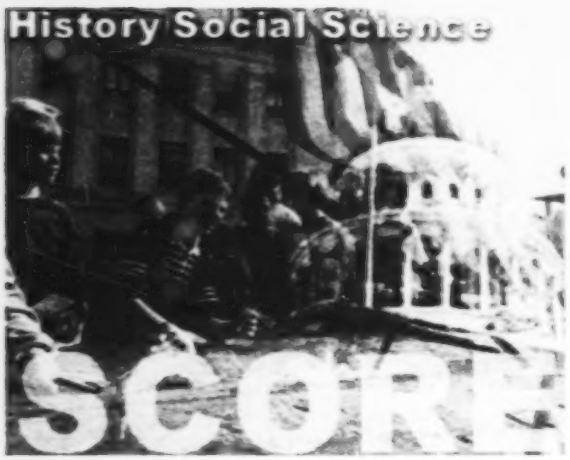

Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

The Museum Project

7th Grade Lesson by Carrie Zinn

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The Museum Project

▶ Teacher Notes

ART IMITATES LIFE

We will be creating an African Art Museum. Each team is responsible for one wing of the museum. You must name your wing after someone in African history that is linked to your assigned region of Africa. Your team will present art and information about that art on your wall of the museum. Finally, you will give guided tours of your part of the museum to the rest of the class.

The Task

You and your team must gather information and pictures about African art by region, and create a wing of the museum. Each team will give guided tours to the other team members.

Process

Step One
You will be assigned a region in Africa to study and research information about the people and their art, both ancient and modern.

Step Two
You will select which art to display in your wing.

Step Three
Each art object must be researched and the following questions must be answered:

1. who created it?
2. when was it created?
3. what materials were used to create it?
4. what is the significance of art as it relates to the people's culture?

Step Four
Each of you will be assigned a role.
Researchers: computer time, Internet and Library. (all members of the team)
Designers: create the look and feel of the museum. (one to two team members)
Recorders: responsible to take notes during team meetings. (one member)
Tour Guides: responsible to guide class through museum. (all members)

Step Five
Your team will create your museum wall by downloading art images from Internet sites, and scanning art from books provided by the teacher. You will write captions for each piece of art and list its source.

Step Six
Every member of your team is responsible for selecting at least one piece of art for display. You need a one page report answering the four questions in step three, submitted as a kind of off-line museum guide.

Step Seven
Each team will give guided tours of their wing of the museum.

Resources

http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/index.html
http://www.artnetweb.com/guggenheim/africa/africamap.html
http://www.arts-online.com/vis-art/808/ListOfImages.html
http://www.lib.virginia.edu/dic/exhib/93.ray.aa/Exhibition.html
http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Home_Page/AFR_GIDE.html
http://www.lib.virginia.edu/dic/exhib/93.ray.aa/African.html

Learning Advice

You need to do thorough research on the assigned regions to understand the people and their culture and, therefore, to truly understand their art. It is important to know what the art means to the people; its symbolic purpose, for example, or its use in the religion of the area. Allow team members to choose the art and the area of work in the museum that best suits their individual talents. All of you must be actively involved in the research and construction of the wing of the museum.

Conclusion

After the tours have been completed, you will vote on what is the most beautiful piece of art in the museum.

Evaluation

Your Assignment will be assessed based on the following criteria.

1. Exhibit has a representative collection.
2. Organization of the exhibit is clear.
3. Research questions clearly answered for each piece of art.

Reflection

What did you learn about the people of Africa through their art?
How did the environment or natural resources impact the native art?
What did you find beautiful about the art you studied?

Teacher Notes

Grade Level: 10th Grade World History African Unit
H/SS Content Standards:

7.4 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the Sub-Saharan civilizations of Ghana and Mali in Medieval Africa, in terms of:

> 3.the role of the trans-Saharan caravan trade in the changing religious and cultural characteristics of West Africa, and the influence of Islamic beliefs, ethics and law

5.the importance of written and oral traditions in the transmission of African history and culture

10.4 Students analyze patterns of global change in the era of New Imperialism in at least two of the following regions or countries: Africa, Southeast Asia, China, India, Latin America and the Philippines, in terms of:

3.imperialism from the perspective of the colonizers and the colonized and the varied immediate and long-term responses by the people under colonial rule

10.10 Students analyze instances of nation-building in the contemporary world in two of the following regions or countries: the Middle East, Africa, Mexico and other parts of Latin America, or China, in terms of:

1.challenges in the region, including its geopolitical, cultural, military, and economic significance and the international relationships in which it is involved

2.the recent history of the region, including the political divisions and systems, key leaders, religious issues, natural features, resources, and population patterns

3.the important trends in the region today and whether they appear to serve the cause of individual freedom and democracy

Lesson Purpose: To understand the role of art in the development of a culture.
Time: approx. 1-2 weeks
Materials: board space or foam boards, construction paper, markers, books from the library on African art
Interdisciplinary connections: literature, music
This should lead to a class discussion of "beauty is in the eye of the beholder". Students may also discuss, or write, or be tested on, what they learned about the people of Africa through their art.

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